

**ADULT EDUCATION IN BRAZILIAN AND PORTUGUESE DEMOCRACY: A  
LOOK AT GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS**

***A EDUCAÇÃO DE ADULTOS NA DEMOCRACIA BRASILEIRA E PORTUGUESA: UM  
OLHAR SOBRE OS PROGRAMAS DE GOVERNO***

***L'ÉDUCATION DES ADULTES DANS LA DÉMOCRATIE BRÉSILIENNE ET  
PORTUGAISE: UN REGARD SUR LES PROGRAMMES GOUVERNEMENTAUX***

 Rúben Manuel Amores MARREIROS  
University of Lisboa  
e-mail: rubenmarreiros@ie.ulisboa.pt

 Ana Claudia Dantas CAVALCANTI  
Federal University of Grande Dourados  
e-mail: anacavalcanti@ufgd.edu.br

 Sara Castanheira de Carvalho Pereira SARAIVA  
University of Lisboa  
e-mail: arienatsac@hotmail.com

 Carmen de Jesus Dores CAVCOCO  
University of Lisboa  
e-mail: rubenmarreiros@ie.ulisboa.pt

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**ABSTRACT:** The research aims to understand the space that adult education holds, from the perspective of political action, through the analysis of the proposals (from the) political parties, expressed in the Governmental plans of the latest presidential news, in Brazil (2018), and in the electoral programs of the last legislative elections, in Portugal (2019). The guiding question of the discussion is the following: What place does adult education holds in the government plans of the political parties in Brazil and Portugal? Having into consideration the methodological point of view, it was chosen a qualitative approach, relying on the content analysis of the electoral political plans. The investigation allowed to identify, in the Brazilian political arena and in the Portuguese one, that the public policy proposals for adult education, when identified, assume a diverse set of purposes. It is notable the trend towards an adult education field strongly associated with a set of intentions based on the Lifelong Learning perspective, translated into the instrumentalization of education in the service of economic development.

**KEYWORDS:** Adult Education. Political parties. Public policy. Democracy.

**RESUMO:** A investigação tem como objetivo compreender o espaço que a educação de adultos ocupa na perspectiva da ação política, através da análise das propostas dos vários partidos políticos, expressas nos planos de governo das últimas eleições presidenciais, no Brasil (2018), e nos programas eleitorais das últimas eleições legislativas, em Portugal (2019). A questão orientadora da problematização é a seguinte: Qual o lugar que a educação de adultos assume nos planos de governo dos partidos políticos do Brasil e Portugal? Do ponto de vista metodológico optou-se pela abordagem qualitativa, com recurso à análise de conteúdo dos planos políticos eleitorais. A investigação permitiu identificar, tanto na arena político-partidária brasileira como na portuguesa, que as propostas de políticas públicas de educação de adultos, quando identificadas, assumem um conjunto diversificado de finalidades. Evidencia-se a tendência de um campo de educação de adultos fortemente associado a um conjunto de intenções políticas baseadas na perspectiva da Aprendizagem ao Longo da Vida, traduzida na instrumentalização da educação ao serviço do desenvolvimento económico.

**PALAVRAS-CHAVE:** Educação de adultos. Partidos políticos. Políticas públicas. Democracia.

**RESUMÉ:** La recherche vise à comprendre l'espace pris par l'éducation des adultes dans la perspective de l'action politique, à travers l'analyse des propositions présentées par les différents partis politiques, exprimées dans les plans gouvernementaux présentés lors des dernières élections présidentielles, au Brésil (2018), et dans le programmes électoraux des dernières élections législatives, au Portugal (2019). La question posé est la suivant: quelle est la place de l'éducation des adultes dans les projets gouvernementaux des partis politiques au Brésil et au Portugal? Au niveau méthodologique nous avons choisi une approche qualitative, en utilisant l'analyse du contenu des plans gouvernementaux électoraux. La recherche a permis d'identifier dans l'arène des partis politiques brésiliens et portugaises, que les propositions en matière d'éducation des adultes assument un ensemble des buts divers. La tendance plus évident est l'orientation du domaine de l'éducation des adultes pour la qualification de ressources humaines, donc leur instrumentalisation au service du développement l'économique.

**MOTS-CLÉS:** Éducation des adultes. Partis politiques. Politique publique. Démocratie.

## Introduction

This research aims to understand the space that adult education occupies from the perspective of political action, through the analysis of the proposals presented by the various political parties, expressed in the government plans presented in the last presidential elections, in Brazil in 2018, and in the electoral programs of the last legislative elections, in Portugal in 2019. Throughout the text, the terminology of **government program** is adopted to designate both Brazilian government plans and Portuguese electoral programs, since they are documents that address the same content, that is, a set of political intentions. It is assumed that political parties "play an essential role in the functioning of democracies, and also in their quality" (JALALI, 2017, p. 104). Faced with this objectification, it is questioned: What centrality do political parties in Brazil and Portugal, through their government programs, attribute to adult education.

The methodology is the key part of the research process, and is architected "tailored" to the specificity of the situation under study and the theoretical framework of reference" (CAVACO, 2009). The problematization presented in the text resulted from a qualitative research, based on document collection and content analysis. Documentary research as a privileged data collection technique, which, according to Afonso (2005, p. 88), consists of the use of existing information in previously elaborated documents, with the "objective of obtaining relevant data to answer research questions. Thus, documentary research can be understood as a set of operations that, through the processes of choice, collection and analysis, proposes to study and analyze different documents in an attempt to identify factual information that serves the purpose of the research (LÜDKE; ANDRE, 1986).

This research is part of a naturalistic approach of interpretative characteristics, focusing on the government programs presented in the last legislative and presidential elections, in Portugal, in 2019, and in Brazil, in 2018. From the point of view of methodological procedures, we chose to collect and analyze the information contained in Portuguese and Brazilian government programs, aiming at the intentions and public policy projects in adult education. Taking into account the educational practices highlighted by Canário (2008), as constituents of this domain, the analysis focused on the elements related to recurrent education, literacy, professional training, sociocultural animation and local development. In this field, education is considered as a "*continuum*" process that "occurs throughout the scope of life" (ALHEIT, 2013, p. 139).

The field of adult education comprises a set of educational practices of a diversified and

complex nature that, in articulation and interaction, are represented in institutions, actors and educational purposes. Thus, the field of adult education integrates literacy and basic education, professional training, the processes of recognition and validation of experiential acquired, sociocultural animation and local development. It is a set of educational practices that are simultaneously influenced and influenced by less social, political, cultural and economic phenomenon (ALVES *et al.*, 2016). According to Alves *et al.* (2016), adult education practices include "a continuum of the modalities of formal education, non-formal education and informal education, dynamics that can be organized in a logic of self-management of communities and people or, in an opposite logic, of offering and consuming services" (ALVES *et al.*, 2016, p. 151). In the text, we chose to use the designation adult education, but in this context, within the scope of public policies, the term used in Brazil is Youth and Adult Education (EJA) and in Portugal, Adult Education and Training (EFA).

The text is organized into four sections. The first section focuses on international and national political guidelines in the field of adult education; the second section focuses on the logics and models that mark the field of adult education and that we take in this text as a contribution to the analysis of political orientations; the third section characterizes the political programs of government, in Brazil and Portugal; the fourth section presents a discussion and final considerations.

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### **Youth and Adult Education (EJA): global views and national actions**

Today, we live in a context of neoliberal globalization that is realized in the dissemination of policies and practices based on market logics, adopted across all sectors. In adult education and training, a sector involved in a context of multiple transitions and widely mobilized to a knowledge society that the economy imposes, in most countries of Europe and Latin America, the emergence of public educational policies subordinated to an economic-productive logic, under a model of management, which is notorious in the documents of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), European Union (EU) and the United Nations Educational, Science and Culture Organization (UNESCO) (CANÁRIO, 2008; CAVACO, 2009; CAVALCANTI, 2019; LIMA, 2005).

The inclusion of adult learning, in this global economic-productive logic, was visibly manifested by the transition from the Continuing Education movement to the perspective of Lifelong Learning, notorious in the discourses of international organizations such as the OECD and UNESCO, and of the European and international political guidelines themselves, within

the framework of a "set of social transformations that have affected the economy, work and training in the last quarter of the 20th century" (CANÁRIO, 2013, p. 17, our translation). The 5th UNESCO Conference, held in Hamburg in 1997, marks the moment of rupture with the ideals of Continuing Education, identifying new guidelines for adult education, based on the perspective of Lifelong Learning. Adult education, strategically instrumentalized to promote economic growth through the qualification of human resources, is now understood as a duty (ALVES *et al.*, 2016), giving people, more than state institutions, the responsibility to contribute to the objectives of the community, by seeking education. Adult education is thus referred to a reductive and instrumentalized logic, focused on employability and subordinated to the demands of the labor market, offering an answer "to the needs of business production and to the management of (dis) employment" (CANÁRIO, 2013, p. 13, our translation).

According to Gadotti (2016), references to citizenship were being sent to the background to the detriment of market demands:

Based on the theory of human capital, learning becomes an individual responsibility and education, a service, not a right. This mercantile ethos shifted education to training and learning. The initial humanistic view was replaced, in social and educational policies, by an instrumental, mercantilist view (GADOTTI, 2016, p. 3, our translation).

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According to Cavaco (2009, p. 156, our translation), the discourse of individual accountability, shaped at the Fifth UNESCO Conference, has given rise to a new role for the State that is oriented to the "definition of policies, for the monitoring, supervision and evaluation of practices", in consultation with civil society, the private sector and the social partners, responsibility for the definition and development of these policies, as well as the financing of adult education practices. According to Lima (2010), we can then interpret this new educational order as: "a combination of forms of centralized and systemic control with forms of control and decentralized and individual, resulting in a landscape of trendily polycentric feature and varied protagonisms of the State, the market and the community" (LIMA, 2010, p. 46, our translation).

This new political perspective has taken on a global trend, which is reflected in the planning of national educational policies in Brazil and Portugal. In Portugal, the adult education sector has been marked, since the revolution of 1974, by discontinuous educational policies, characteristic "by the interspersed, fragmentation and strong dependence on political cycles" (ALVES *et al.*, 2016, p. 161). With Portugal's entry into the European Economic Community (EEC) in 1986, adult education policies and practices were reconfigured to respond to the logic

that underlies the perspective of Lifelong Learning:

Therefore, the mid-1990s arrives with a national scenario in which the tripod for supporting public adult education policies consisted of: first, in the clear financial abandonment of the modalities of non-school type and non-vocational or vocational matrix; secondly, in the strong induction by public bodies and European funding of new social interventions that have rarely had, as their main objective, widely understood adult education actions; and third, by the progressive delegitimization and spraying of the sector in terms of its own institutional framework (MACHADO; BARROS, 2020, p. 100, our translation).

It is in this context of disinvestment in a global and articulated view of Adult Education, unifying the diversity of existing modalities (basic education, popular education, community education or local development), that public policies are being shaped, mostly based on a "technical-instrumental logic of human resources management" (ALVES *et al.*, 2016, p. 160, our translation), and strongly stimulated by an agenda globally organized by supranational structures.

It should be stressed that, in convergence with the perspective of Lifelong Learning, in recent years, a set of practices have emerged in Portugal which, although aimed primarily at mitigating the skills weaknesses of the working population, have denoted a strong political investment in the field of adult education, extending the national network affecting the sector, and expanding the diversification of supply (BARROS, 2013; CAVACO, 2009; LIMA, 2005) – stand out the Recurrent Adult Education (ERA), Out-of-School Education (EEA), adult education and training courses (EFA courses), S@ber+ actions, and the offer of Recognition, Validation and Certification of Competencies (RVCC) through the implementation of the *New Opportunities Initiative*.

The absence of materialization of ideas in public policies in Latin America, and consequently in Brazil, marks the discontinuity of government policies, focusing on sectoral approaches and increased compensatory logics, with literacy conception in short endings, and presenting fragile governance structures. In the case of Brazil, Pierro (2018) points out the lack of training for EJA teachers and the absence of democratization of information and communication technologies. With this scenario, the author analyzes that the offer of education in the EJA modality does not positively impact, due to the low prestige in government priorities in Latin America.

In Brazil, according to Sérgio and Morgado (2014, p. 135, our translation), the EJA has not been a domain of investment in the field of public policies, because: "Throughout the history of Brazilian education, the EJA has always been marked by limited times and spaces and by the

absence of specific public policies, to the detriment of other teaching modalities, being therefore often relegated to a secondary plane.

It becomes impossible to dissociate educational public policies in Brazil without reflecting them in the context of the global proposal that develops in the world, because Brazil is a signatory to such proposals and began this endorsement when it changed the state model in 1995 with Bresser Pereira. Thus, the teaching policy, whose corporate management philosophy translates into its characteristics of an education aimed at the formation of a large skilled labor force to the market and with this, the whole process that composes it to justify its purposes. In this context, there is a masked intentionality of participatory legitimacy, given that legislation on which a participatory state model is based in Brazil, established from the 1988 Constitution, remains in force in the regulatory frameworks of the management State. For this concealment, we find a state that legitimizes its institutional actions with participatory façade, whose mantle extends to deliberations in public spaces, involving society and its movements for this purpose (CAVALCANTI, 2019).

Public policies for adult education in Brazil and Portugal are discontinuous and fragmented, and they also adopt an instrumentalized and reductive perspective of education at the service of economic development, relegating its importance in terms of human development and citizenship.

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### **Adult education logics and models: a global design**

The discourses and public policy measures of recent decades allow us to identify globally the influence of different logics in the field of adult education. Lima and Guimarães (2018) present a typology consisting of three logics, which allows analyzing public policies of adult education, which are: the "democratic-emancipatory logic"; "logic of modernization and state control"; and the "logic of human resource management". The typologies presented by the aforementioned authors converge with the ideas of Fernández (2005) that indicates a set of models in adult education, which are: the "social dialogical model" that resembles the "democratic-emancipatory logic"; the "literacy model" that approaches the "logic of modernization and state control"; and the "productive economic model" that relates to the "logic of human resource management".

The democratic-emancipatory logic and the social dialogical model are guided by a perspective that focuses on the assumptions of cultural tradition, popular culture and popular education, "as a set of cultural activities for the development of culture, contributing to the

overcoming of the negativities of all and what cultures, and to the affirmation and impulse of their positivity" (SOUZA, 2007, p. 37, our translation).

The logic of modernization and control and state is characterized by the centrality of the State "in the definition and educational provision, being essential its intervention in the guarantee of education for all, free" (LIMA; GUIMARÃES, 2018, p. 607, our translation), focusing on social modernization and economic, with the public and mass school being its epicenter. In order to compensate and repair the "deficit" of competencies of adults, we are essentially assisted with the use of methodologies based on the school form and, consequently, schooling of educational processes. Thus, there is the subordination of adult education practices to a set of "schooling guidelines, under centralized control of education policy and administration" (LIMA, 2005, p. 33, our translation).

The logic of human resources management gains prominence "from the mid-1990s, when concerns arise with the issues of employment, competitiveness, economic development, coinciding with a progressive instrumentalization of the field of adult education according to active employment policies" (CAVACO, 2009, p. 175, our translation). Therefore, it is in a context of globalization and strong competitiveness that "the knowledge valued and recognized are, above all, those resulting from formalized and certified processes" (CAVACO, 2009, p. 176, our translation). Thus, the relevance attributed to problematizing, emancipatory and critical education is ignored, and professional training is overvalued, that is, those learnings only with economic validity, in a scenario in which learning to ensure competitive advantage gains particular prominence.

It seems important to recognize the complexity inherent to the analysis of political orientations, because they are characteristic of diversity, mutation, and hybrid character. The analysis of the government programs of the political parties, in the last presidential and legislative elections, in Brazil and Portugal, was carried out based on the previously identified logics.

## Adult Education and Training: government programs in Brazil and Portugal

The analysis of government programs in Portugal and government programs in Brazil allows us to see that the political views and intentions advocated by the various parties in the field of education mainly focus on education and formalized education, aimed at children and young people. With regard to educational practices aimed at adults, when presented, they tend to assume a secondary importance in the strategic documents of each party. It is therefore considered essential to present, in general terms, each party and its understanding of education, in an attempt to identify the scope and importance that education, and in particular adult education, assumes in these documents.

In the Portuguese case, we studied the programs of government of the nine political parties with parliamentary seats, elected in the last legislative elections, in 2019, they are: Socialist Party (PS), Social Democratic Party (PSD), Left Bloc (BE), Communist Party Portuguese (PCP), Social Democratic Center - Popular Party (CDS-PP), People-Animals-Nature (PAN), Chega, Liberal Initiative, Livre.

In the Brazilian case, we studied the government programs of the nine most voted candidates/political parties in the last presidential elections, in 2018, they are: Candidate without Party, Workers' Party (PT), Democratic Labor Party (PDT), Brazilian Social Democracy Party (PSDB), Novo Party, Brazilian Democratic Movement (MDB), Sustainability Network (REDE), Coalition True Change, Socialism and Freedom Party (PSOL). | 9

## Adult Education in the political-partisan space Portuguese

The Electoral Program of the Socialist Party (PS) underlines the importance of "making lifelong learning a strategic plan for the next decade", by extending access to training. Lifelong learning is understood in a link between qualification and requalification, in a "close link with the needs and evolution of the labor market", but master's sections for a "development model capable of sustainably combining economic competitiveness and social cohesion", as the party points out. The electoral program also highlights the interest in "combating the fragmentation of funding and management instruments of vocational training through different national and international funds". In addition, the intention to "strengthen the modalities and training pathways closer to the labor market" as a "decisive step towards a successful strategy for promoting lifelong learning and training", in an interconnection between "businesses, business associations, Inter-municipal communities and municipalities", without neglecting "new strategic areas such as cross-cutting skills or digital skills at all levels of training, extending the

qualifications base in these areas."

The electoral program of the Social Democratic Party (PSD) stresses that educational policies will have to consider as a priority a set of four very broad purposes, which launch the debate on a new Basic Law of Education, which are: (1) 'to train people, through the emancipatory dimension of freedom and autonomy, civility and discipline, the values and attitudes characteristic of societies open to social and cultural diversity, such as respect, tolerance and solidarity in the face of difference; (2) to train individuals who master knowledge, manage to mobilize it through the different ways of thinking, the ability to question the acquired and the development of a critical culture that can enhance innovation, cultural creation and the full development of the human person; (3) train people for "a citizenship founded on the ethics of responsibility and built on the awareness and knowledge of their rights and duties to other citizens. To train for active and participatory citizenship in the different contexts of collective action: from local to national, from European to universal; (4) in addition to training people and citizens it is intended to train professionals trained to integrate adult life, seize or create their own opportunities, contribute to the creation of wealth through their qualifications. The nature of the fourth purpose, which seeks to 'train professionals', gains particular prominence by assuming employment and the quality of human capital as fundamental to the competitiveness of the Portuguese economy, which is why 'education and vocational training must be focused on the needs of companies'.

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The electoral program of the Left Bloc (BE) bets on a view that is expressed through the idea that 'neoliberal ideology contaminated Education with the language and thought of management and economics (the true 'Edwardians') and led to the *secondarization* of social sciences and education and the retreat to an education', of a technocratic nature, positivist and meritocratic, strongly reproducing social inequalities. In seeking to recover the values of public investment prior to the intervention of the troika, the program proposes: increasing public investment to a minimum level of 10 billion EUROS per year, in particular for health and education, with the aim of finding a response to the persistence of illiteracy in Portugal.

CHEGA's electoral program defends the almost exclusivity of the family with regard to the responsibility of the education of the following generations. This political party advocates an education governed exclusively by the market, with the privatization of the educational system, the "extinction of the Ministry of Education" and the public school. The electoral program reveals a reductive and subordinate perspective of education, at the service of indoctrination of the "principles and values" of the party.

The Electoral Program of the Communist Party Portuguese (PCP) presents 'education

as a strategic vector for the development of the country, at the economic and social level', adding that 'it is a fundamental right and a determining condition for the individual and collective emancipation of youth, the population in general and workers in particular'. The political party thus presents as intention 'the strengthening of the interaction education/culture; the adoption of an appropriate vocational education funding model and an adult education and training plan, and a lifelong learning program'.

The People-Animals-Nature (PAN) electoral program presents an electoral program that 'is not exhausted in the climate emergency and that prioritizes the dignity of the human person and the responses that are demanded for its realization and self-determination'. It is a program 'that makes a firm commitment to empowering people through education and culture as central tools in building a more empathetic and conscious society'.

The LIVRE electoral program argues that education is, at the same time, the mirror of a society and the modeler of the following generations. He adds that Portugal has a very unequal society and education has been unable to combat inequality. Therefore, 'it is necessary to unlock the paths that will lead to education being, in fact, the social elevator that will give rise to a more equal society'.

The electoral program of the Social Democratic Center - Popular Party (CDS-PP) bets on a vision that aims to reform education in order to better prepare individuals 'for the risks and opportunities of the global world'. To this end, it proposes a 'revolution in vocational training' in order to 'guide vocational training for professional skills and employment, not academic qualifications'.

The Electoral Program of the Liberal Initiative advocates the privatization of the educational system, with the consequent reduction of the state's competences in the definition, organization and regulation of educational policies. In the field of education, this program focuses almost exclusively on higher education, more specifically on its privatization.

## Adult education in the Brazilian political-partisan space

Jair Messias Bolsonaro<sup>1</sup>, currently without a political party, assumes in his government proposal a vision that implies, above all, for 'changing the method of management, in education' and this includes literacy, purging the ideology of Paulo Freire.

In the government proposal, the Workers' Party (PT) defends 'the centrality of illiteracy reduction actions', with a view to education 'inclusive in all stages and modalities of education', based on a policy of regional and territorial development.

The Democratic Labor Party (PDT), in the government proposal, expresses the intention of 'expanding the network of schools for literacy and teaching of young people and adults'.

The Novo Party expresses its vision through a proposal aimed at bringing 'vocational education closer to the real demands of the labor market'.

The Brazilian Democratic Movement (MDB) prioritizes a view that advocates that 'there is no way to face the technologies of the 21st century', without changing the 'way of thinking about education, work, social security and business regulation'.

In the government proposal, the Sustainability Network (REDE) presents 'education as a right and basis for development', which seeks to increase 'the expansion of comprehensive education, respecting the times and specificities of each locality', whose higher education and the eradicate illiteracy, occupy a relevant place. | 12

The True Change Coalition does not put forward any kind of proposal in adult education in its government proposal.

The Socialism and Freedom Party (PSOL) affirms its vision through a government program 'committed to confronting the economic, social, political, historical privileges of the ruling class in the country'. He argues that, from a historical point of view, 'education capable of socializing science, technology, art and culture to all people – children, young people, adults and the elderly, was a class privilege'. Higher education and joint work between states and municipalities and with the support of civil society, in order to eradicate illiteracy, are mentioned as a priority bet.

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<sup>1</sup> He has no party affiliation.

### The political-party intentions in the

The political-party intentions of Brazil and Portugal in the field of literacy should consider that illiteracy is a social and educational problem that currently afflicts 6.6% and 5% of the population in Brazil and Portugal, respectively. In the documents analyzed, the reference to adult literacy and the eradication of illiteracy are presented in the authorship of the Brazilian parties PT, PDT, REDE and PSOL, and the BE, in the case Portuguese.

The PDT seeks, with support from the Federal Government, to expand the network of schools for literacy and teaching of young people and adults. Intention that meets the proposal enunciated by the REDE party, when seeking to face "the problem of illiteracy of about 11.8 million Brazilians over 15 years". While the PT intends "the centrality of actions to reduce illiteracy, expanding vacancies, from ProJovem and MOVA-Brazil as references", especially "in the most vulnerable regions" and in an "inclusive perspective", as the political party indicates. In order to overcome the historical trend of millions of Brazilians excluded from the educational offer, the EJA appears to be for the PSOL, as an inseparable part of the right to have education throughout life. This party stands out from the other political parties by proposing in a more consolidated way 'a joint work with states and municipalities and with the support of civil society', in order to 'eradicate illiteracy and drastically reduce functional illiteracy, in all age groups' of Brazilian citizens, through the expansion of the number of vacancies and welfare policies, referring to the MOVA-Brazil initiative, especially in the most vulnerable regions. Also, on the political intentions in the field of adult literacy, the idea of "purging the ideology of Paulo Freire", in the context of literacy initiatives in Brazil, as Bolsonaro points out in proposals and projects related to his former political party: Partido Social Liberal - PSL.<sup>2</sup>

In the political-party space Portuguese the problem of illiteracy is expressed by only one political party, the BE, which assumes the problem of illiteracy as worrying in the country. This political party mentions the existence of 500,000 illiterate people in the country, especially in rural areas and among women. Thus, in order to consider ways of eradicating illiteracy and according to the "permanent education framework", this political party aims to carry out 'a decentralized strategy of eradication of illiteracy, with a special focus on the population more distant from the public school system', assuming that 'there can be no inclusive education that does not respond to the persistence of illiteracy in Portugal'. The operability of this educational intention is materialized in the promotion of the 'public school, of post-work

<sup>2</sup> One example is the 'School Without Party' Project.

courses aimed at adults who wish to improve their education', as the political party expressed.

Party political intentions in the field of local development and sociocultural animation consist of a set of educational practices that have been little evidenced and valued in the documents analyzed. The political intentions, in this educational context, come from political parties in Brazil, with the proposals presented by the PT and the REDE. In Portugal, proposals from the political parties PCP, Livre and PAN are presented. The PT expresses in its political-party document the intention of promoting a 'regional and territorial development policy', resulting from the 'need for a new Brazilian agenda of teaching and research articulated to local and regional knowledge networks, advancing in the creation and dissemination of knowledge, indicators and models of public policies specific and capable of guiding territorial development', an integrated, inclusive and sustainable approach to the future. In order to encourage 'the expansion of comprehensive education' the REDE proposes to respect the times and specificities of each locality, articulating different sectoral policies and partnerships with organized civil society'. In the Portuguese context, the CFP proposes regional, sustained and territorial cohesion-based development, requiring the promotion of policies to promote the enhancement of the rural world and inland and island regions, the fulfilment of public service obligations (health and education services, financial services, transport, communications, telecommunications, energy and others) and the correction of unequal development. In the Livre electoral program is the intention to contribute to 'the investment in adult education and training, generalizing the perception that learning takes place throughout life', through non-formal and informal learning at all ages, including Senior Universities, both in urban and rural areas. A society for sustainable development is seen in a logic of continuing education. The PAN assumes its option through the development of 'formative offers that can contribute to the population's fixation in inland territories', to reduce regional asymmetries.

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Political intentions in the field of professional training are widely mentioned by Portuguese political parties, while in the Brazilian context there are two political parties that indicate their relevance. In the Brazilian context, the proposals are not expressive and generalist. The Novo Party advocates a 'professional management', which must follow the various educational contexts, according to the logic of 'the labor market'. Like the MDB, it bets on the political intention that understands professional and technical training as a mechanism to 'face the technologies of the 21st century, without changing our way of thinking about education, work, social security and business regulation'. To this end, it proposes to 'facilitate the insertion of young people in the labor market by expanding the supply of vacancies in technical education and encouraging first employment'.

In the Portuguese context, professional training assumes in the electoral program a prominent place, being referenced by the following parties: PS, PSD, CDS-PP and PCP. For the PS, 'lifelong learning and qualifications of young people and adults is presented as a national plan', proposing to 'create good conditions for strengthening and modernizing public policies for vocational training', and thus addressing 'the profound changes underway in the economy, technology, markets and the labor market'. To this end, the political party advocates 'integrating the continuous training of workers in enterprises, in their various modalities, in public policy of vocational training'; 'betting on 'e-learning' and 'b-learning' within the framework of public vocational training policy'; as well as 'launch, using European funds, an integrated investment program in the requalification of training centers' facilities and technological infrastructure'. Vocational training in response to the needs of the economy is also presented as an educational practice highlighted in the electoral program of the CDS-PP. It highlights the need for the urgent review of training courses and references, which the political party considers to be 'depriving people of training that prepares them for the challenges of the global world', training that aims to 'privilege training centers in partnership with the private sector', since 'people cannot be dependent on the training that the Pre-Formatted State'. In this sense, the party proposes the strengthening of the training check, considered as an 'essential instrument for linking training to the business world, reinforcing the freedom of trainees, together with the company, for the definition of the training path'. The CDS-PP also expresses the innovative intention to create in Portugal 'competition mechanisms to improve the offer' of vocational training, 'assessed in employability rankings and funded in accordance with these *rankings*'.

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As part of the proposals in vocational training, the PSD presents in its electoral program the political intention of 'training professionals capable of integrating adult life, taking advantage of or creating their own opportunities, contributing to the creation of wealth through their qualifications'. To this end, it bets on the recovery of the program 'Young Technicians for Industry', this, "with the support of the Sector Technology Centers, programs to encourage the integration of our young graduates, in the scientific, technological and management areas, in Portuguese companies, with the economic purpose of filling, 'adequately the knowledge row of the most dynamic Portuguese companies'.

The CFP, on vocational training, expresses in its electoral program the proposal for an 'employment policy with rights for all, including employment and training programs adjusted to the conditions and qualifications of the unemployed'. This is a political intention, which points to a more inclusive vision, by aiming at 'the development of employment and training programs aimed at people with specific needs, in order to include people with disabilities and

other groups with insertion difficulties at work'. The party also proposes the 'realizing of the right to continuing training, an essential instrument of professional updating and strengthening of qualifications and competences', as well as 'improving vocational training and qualification to immediately increase the responsiveness of services'.

The political-party intentions within the process of recognition and validation of competencies allows the increase of school and/or professional qualification, through the identification and valorization of knowledge and competencies developed through life experience. The reference to the implementation of the recognition and validation of adult skills is the subject of proposals only in Portugal, being suggested by two political parties. In Portugal, the recognition and validation of competencies was implemented in 2000 by a PS Government, an initiative resumed in the electoral program, in 2019. The electoral program mentions the importance of recognizing and validating competencies in the qualification of adults, because 'in addition to promoting investment in the approximation of hundreds of thousands of people to qualification' also allows 'the adequacy of training path courses to individual profiles and needs'. Under the *Qualifica* Program, the political party seeks to 'extend the contact points of the Network' of *Qualifica* Centers, on the basis of a 'program of positive differentiation of low-density territories', in an attempt to strengthen local coordination and consultation between municipalities, businesses and local actors.

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The importance attached to the recognition and validation of adult skills is also expressed in the PAN's electoral program. The political party presents as a political intention the bet 'on the requalification or professional reorientation of adults, stimulating programs that encourage lifelong learning, namely the balance of competences', along with 'a strong investment in modular training and continuity that allows the continuation of studies or the addition of a degree of specialist'.

## Final considerations

The research aimed to understand the political logics in force in the political guidelines of adult education, through the content analysis of government programs, presented in the last legislative elections in Portugal in 2019 and in the last Presidential elections of Brazil in 2018. In this sense, it should be noted that the analysis of party documents shows great differences between each other, both between countries and in national terms. One of the main differences is related to the size and content of these same documents, because if in Brazil the documents present a very synthetic nature, in Portugal, they reveal a greater specification and development.

The reference to the field of adult education is barely visible in the documents analyzed, which leads us to affirm that it is a field of educational practices that assume a background, when compared with the various measures that affect formal education and education, namely children and young people. Thus, it is advocated that the absence and concealment of the field of adult education, in most government programs of the political parties analyzed, refers to a deliberate decision; This leads to the lack of political projects and the existence of single measures in adult education, which in turn are, in turn, based on a 'logic of human resources', in association with the idea of certification, qualification, human capital, productivity and competitiveness, in favor of installed economic interests. | 17

Despite a political interest in solving the problem of illiteracy in Brazil and Portugal, the identified political parties are also witnessed by the low visibility that these practices assume in the documents analyzed. Thus, it is observed that both in Brazil and in Portugal, in terms of priority, it is no longer about literacy adults, but of promoting compulsory schooling among young people and low-school adults, as Cavaco (2009) mentions. Thus, literacy movements characteristic of ethical and human principles, based on popular education and "democratic-emancipatory logic" (LIMA; GUIMARÃES, 2018), and that far distance themselves from ethical and market values.

For the various political parties, vocational training seems to function as an antidote to all the evils that afflict contemporary society. Vocational training is indicated as a response to the profound changes in the economy, in particular technology and the labor market.

Between Brazil and Portugal, it can be seen that: a) the documents analyzed, even if they have theoretically the purpose of explaining the various measures in the various sectors of society, these are characterized by their generalist and synthetic nature, circumscribing adult education to school education; b) the subordination of education to the dictates of economics and the commodification of education, which has as counterpoint a little visible set of

educational practices of humanistic and ethical basis, promoting emancipation, in turn, currently overshadowed by the logic of capital and the absence of public support; c) there is a set of intentions that converge to an agenda that tends to the privatization of adult education practices, in communion with the global logic, inhibiting participatory and emancipatory spaces; d) as Le Veugle (1976) advocates, the risk we run in the current context of developing the field of adult education seems to us to be the constitution of a kind of technocrats of adult education. Therefore, in democratic spaces such as Brazil and Portugal, it is now necessary to revisit and perspective a 'new' horizon for adult education, in a line of construction of ethics and citizenship, which "means, objectively, to develop policies that contemplate the improvement of the conditions of political and citizen education, and in the need to reinvent what all men have in common: human dignity and the dignity of politics as an instrument of social transformation" (FONSECA, 2006, p. 260, our translation).

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## About the authors

### **Rúben Manuel Amores MARREIROS**

PhD student in Educational Sciences - Adult Education.

### **Ana Claudia Dantas CAVALCANTI**

PhD in Education. Visiting Professor at the Federal University of Grande Dourados -UFGD.

### **Sara Castanheira de Carvalho Pereira SARAIVA**

Master in Educational Sciences-Educational Administration, Institute of Education, University of Lisbon, Portugal.

### **Carmen de Jesus Dores CAVCOCO**

PhD in Education. Assistant Professor-IEUL.

**Processing and publishing: Editora Ibero-Americana de Educação.**  
Review, formatting, standardization and translation